



## chapter 1

# What Is the Reading/Writing Connection?

In a darkened studio at the local public broadcasting station, Jamie Salafia's sixth graders, 90 percent of whom are Chicano/Latino and virtually all of whom speak English as a second language, are waiting for instructions to take their places in the spotlight. Some are nervously rehearsing their lines; others are all smiles and counting the minutes until show time. "Okay guys," Hall Davidson, the producer, announces, "positions, please." Picking up their banners for making connections, asking questions, predicting, and so forth, the students scurry to their appointed spots in front of the cameras, prepared to perform a readers' theater dramatization of what goes on in the mind of a reader. One boy, chosen by his classmates to be the "metacognitive dude" who will think aloud as the story is being read, takes his place center stage. Another, whose role is to serve as the "self-monitor," dons a hat and policeman's badge while he waits in the wings.

"This is Take 1 of 'Reading: The Inside Story.' On my count: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 . . . Action!"

*Reader 1:* There was a girl named Abigail who was taking a drive through the country with her parents when she spotted a beautiful, sad-eyed, grey and white pony. And next to it was a sign that said, "FOR SALE—CHEAP."\*

*Metacognitive Dude:* Hey, this reminds me of a time when my neighbor was selling his Chad Muska skateboard. Boy oh boy, did I want that skateboard. I promised my dad I would wash the car for the next 33 years if he would . . .

*Self-Monitor:* STOP! STOP! STOP! Too much personal information. You should get back to the story before you get lost.

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\*"Little Abigail and the Beautiful Pony," by Shel Silverstein from *A Light in the Attic*. Copyright © 1981 Evil Eye Music, LLC. Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

*Metacognitive Dude:* Oh, uh. Sorry, uh, officer?

*Self-Monitor:* You may proceed.

*Reader 2:* “Oh,” said Abigail, “May I have that pony? May I, please?” And her parents said, “No, you may not.” And Abigail said, “But I *must* have that pony.” And her parents said, “Well, you can’t have that pony. But you can have a nice butter pecan ice cream cone when we get home.”

*Metacognitive Dude:* I wonder, why’d they offer her that ice cream cone? Boy, parents. They just don’t get it sometimes, do they? An ice cream cone? HELLOOOO! SHE WANTS A PONY, PEOPLE!

*Self-Monitor:* Off topic! You took a detour and are heading dangerously into irrelevant territory. Get back to the story and stay focused. I don’t want to have to talk to you again about this. Continue, please.

*Reader 3:* And Abigail said, “I don’t want a butter pecan ice cream cone. I want that pony—I must have that pony!”

*Metacognitive Dude:* I’ll bet she doesn’t get that pony.

*Reader 3:* And her parents said, “Be quiet and stop nagging. You’re not getting that pony.” And Abigail began to cry and said, “If I don’t get that pony, I’ll die.” And her parents said, “You won’t die. No child ever died yet from not getting a pony.”

*Metacognitive Dude:* Boy, I can sure identify with that character Abigail. Like I said, when I wanted that skateboard, I promised my parents I’d do all my chores and all those extra things. But they wouldn’t back down. All I heard was what they *always* tell me whenever they don’t feel like buying me something that I want: “Anything worth having is worth working for,” “A penny saved is a penny earned,” “A stitch in time saves nine,” “When I was your age I walked ten miles in the snow to school.”

*Self-Monitor:* ALL RIGHT, THAT’S IT. You’ve gone off topic for the last time.

I’m taking you in. Okay people, let’s move on with the story. There’s more to see here.

*Reader 4:* And Abigail felt so bad that when she went home she went to bed, and she couldn’t eat, and she couldn’t sleep, and she *did* die—all because of a pony that her parents wouldn’t buy. [*Students dramatically reach into their pockets for Kleenex and dab their eyes.*]

*Chorus:* [*Drumroll*] And now for the punchline!

*Reader 5:* This is a good story to read to your folks when they won’t buy you something you want.

*Metacognitive Dude:* You see, I told you Abigail wouldn’t get that pony! [*Laughs*]

Jamie Salafia's students weren't simply acting out Shel Silverstein's "Little Abigail and the Beautiful Pony." Collaborating with their teacher, they wrote this skit to explicitly demonstrate the cognitive strategies they had been taught to access on a daily basis as readers and writers. Jamie comments:

■ Teaching cognitive strategies is a way to make the invisible processes of reading and writing visible to students. It has given my students the tools necessary to make sense of what they are learning and to slow down, check for understanding, identify with a character, or even examine or question why an author chooses to present a character, conflict, or theme a chosen way. Especially because they are English language learners and did not have much practice reflecting on how they learn before coming into my classroom, my students felt so empowered when they could talk about what goes on inside their heads when they read and write. They wanted to explain this to their parents—which was the reason we came up with the skit in the first place. Getting to perform on television was the icing on the cake and an experience of a lifetime for all of us. This success bred a self-confidence that translated across the disciplines and enabled them to tackle new academic challenges.

The purpose of this book is to take a cognitive strategies approach to exploring and reinforcing the reading/writing connection and thus help teachers make visible to their students what experienced readers and writers do when they make meaning from and with texts.

## What Is the Reading/Writing Connection?

Gail Tompkins (2006) notes that reading and writing have been traditionally thought of and taught as flip sides of the coin—as opposites; “readers decoded or deciphered language and writers encoded or produced written language” (p. 46). However, researchers have increasingly noted the connections between reading and writing, identifying them as complementary processes of meaning construction involving the use of similar cognitive strategies. What is it that mature, experienced, and engaged readers and writers do when they make meaning that has prompted researchers to focus on the parallels between these two acts of mind? The reflections of two of my university-level students, Tim Titus and Cris Greaves, illustrate important features of the meaning-making processes of mature readers and writers. We will return to what Tim and Cris have to say as we review the research on the reading/writing connection. Tim describes his behavior as a reader:

■ Reading is a developmental process for me. It is a movie in my head which fleshes out as the story develops. I start by reading the first passage carefully and slowly; I have to get used to the author's style. The first passage colors the entire text in my mind. From there I go through the book slowly. I am a slow reader because I hate to not understand things. If I get stuck, I will go back as many pages as I have to in order to figure out the problem.

Because of the movie that a book triggers in my mind, I get very impatient with texts which don't adequately describe the scene. I want to see it. If I can't, I get frustrated and sometimes can't continue. When I'm engaged, it must be awful to be around me. It's all I can think of or talk about. I've left work early, shown up late, cut dates short and ignored my responsibilities in order to “find out what happens.” I remember locking myself in the closet at the end of *The Two Towers* (“Lord of the Rings,” part 2) because the situation was so intense. The last line, “Frodo was alive, but taken by the enemy,” made me throw the book down and immediately reach for the next book. At the end

of a book (except for *The Two Towers*), I always turn back and read the first paragraph again in an effort to fully understand the journey I have just finished.

—Tim

As an avid reader, Tim enters the text world and assumes the role of coconstructor as he interacts with the author and the words on the page to create his own mental movie. He constantly monitors his comprehension and is aware of how to solve a problem when he encounters one.

Cris analyzes her writing process:

■ How do I transform my thoughts into writing? Hmm. . . . I grasp on to one thing, a symbol, a moment, a color, a feeling. I feel and think with the camera eye. Then I mull and stew, compare it, contrast it, synthesize, humanize my symbol, hopefully twist it into a new shape or feeling, different from the trite. From there, I knock it out without thinking; then I go over and over and over it, rewrite. Mostly, if it is good, the guts are out on the page. My first write is 80% good or basic stuff; then a lot of throwing out goes on. Finally, I edit, but it is a two week process. I live inside of it. Sometimes, I go into great pain—and I know it because it is part of the process. But when I really write something good, the child in me feels a certain awe and wonder (I'm still a knobby-kneed little kid about it), and I am pleased. I feel as if I have shared or done something, so I trudge on willingly.

—Cris

Like Tim, Cris also is a strong visualizer, as she feels and thinks with the “camera eye.” Her entry highlights the interplay between the affective and the cognitive in the process of meaning construction: She reaches deep into her feelings and then will “mull and stew” as she analyzes what to say and how to say it.

As is evident from their reflections, both Tim and Cris are experienced and engaged readers and writers who are knowledgeable, thoughtful, and articulate about what it is that they do when they create meaning from or with texts. My job is easy. I get to prepare students like Tim and Cris—students who have a passion for literacy, who “live inside of” what they read and write—to become secondary classroom teachers. The job they have is infinitely more challenging; for although they are certain to encounter some students who share their “awe and wonder” about literature and language, many more will have neither the commitment nor the capacity that Tim and Cris possess. In order to help inexperienced readers and writers develop confidence and competence, we need to explicitly introduce them to and provide guided practice in the habits of mind demonstrated by more engaged and experienced readers and writers.

## Characteristics of Experienced Readers and Writers



What are these common characteristics? Before reading on, you might want to generate your own knowledge and revisit your assumptions about the characteristics of experienced readers and writers by filling out the first and second columns of the K-W-L chart, a graphic brainstorming organizer, in Figure 1.1 (Ogle, 1986). An 8½-by-11 copy of Figure 1.1 is available on the companion website to this book; a detailed description of the K-W-L previewing strategy is included in Chapter 6. (See p. xvii for instructions for accessing the companion website.)

Figure 1.1 K-W-L Chart (Source: Ogle, 1986.)

Topic: _____		
What I <b>K</b> now	What I <b>W</b> ant to Know	What I <b>L</b> earned

### Active Engagement in Constructing Meaning from and with Texts

Jeff Wilhelm (2008) notes that “Once students have learned how to read, and move through middle school, reading is still regarded as a passive act of receiving someone else’s meaning” (p. 20)—and often of proving that you “get it” by correctly answering the questions at the end of the text. This is perhaps why the General English students in Janet Allen’s (1995) high school class—students identified and labeled as non-college bound—neither saw it as their responsibility nor felt they had the tools to interact with the author and the text to construct their own meaning. Instead, as Allen observes, they waited for reading to *happen* to them, as in the case of her student, Jennifer, who said, “I thought if I just learned all the sounds and the syllables and stuff, I’d be able to read. And then I would open the book and it didn’t happen” (p. 98). This is not unlike the beginning writer who sits, brows furrowed, in front of a blank sheet of paper waiting for inspiration to strike, or who is too focused on getting it right to get anything down. Reading and writing don’t just happen. Experienced readers and writers are active, not passive; productive, not receptive. They interact with language, making movies in their heads, like Tim, or shaping and twisting language like so much clay, as Cris does, to produce the form they want. Whether we are in the role of reader or writer, we make sense—either of or with print—and to make sense we activate our prior knowledge of the topic and the genre, our personal experiences, our reader/writer-based expectations as well as our culturally based expectations, and our contextual frames of reference (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991).

Tierney and Pearson (1983) were among the first researchers to propose that reading and writing are both acts of composing. They make a case for reading not as a sequential series

of stages but as a set of simultaneous processes that parallel what experienced writers do when they compose: processes that include planning, drafting, aligning, revising, and monitoring. Especially compelling is Tierney and Pearson's notion that readers create "drafts" of readings, refinements of meaning that evolve as the person continues reading or rereads, in much the same way as writers produce a first and second draft of a text. Their constructivist view of reading and their consideration of reading and writing as "essentially similar processes of meaning construction" (p. 568) involving the use of cognitive strategies have been echoed by other researchers and have received widespread acceptance within the education community. In fact, Mark Conley (2008) notes, "The national agenda for adolescent literacy is currently dominated by concerns about cognitive strategy instruction" (p. 84).

### The Recursive Process: Going Back in Order to Go Forward

Experienced readers and writers go back in order to go forward. That is, the process is recursive. One of the problems that inexperienced readers have is that they think good readers get it right the first time. Therefore, they plunge in and often proceed on automatic pilot as if on a race to the finish line, oblivious to what they don't understand (Duffy & Roehler, 1987). This may explain why Jan Horn, a community college reading instructor, reports that her students will read straight down a column of text, reading right through print clearly set apart in a shaded sidebar as if it were a continuation of the unshaded column, with only the faintest glimmer that something is amiss. In contrast, experienced readers like Tim, who "hate to not understand things," will go back and work for as long as it takes "to figure out the problem."

Cris, our writer, also goes back, but for a different reason. She is "mulling and stewing" over what she has written. Sondra Perl (1990) notes that few writers she has observed write for long periods of time without going back to reread some or all of what they have previously composed. As she explains, "recursiveness in writing implies that there is a forward moving action that exists by virtue of a backward moving action" (p. 44). In other words, writers reconnect with the ideas they have already articulated in order to generate new ideas. Not only do readers and writers go back to bits of text in order to keep the process moving forward, they may also go back to clarify and refine their thinking. This is one of the reasons why Cris goes "over and over and over" her emerging text. In going back, we often discover new meaning and are prompted to reconstruct our mental or written draft. For example, Natalie Wilson, a ninth grader, writes, "There are many times when I started out to write something but discovered something along the way that made me go back and change the majority of what I wrote as well as change the direction of what I planned on writing. I love when this happens because it is like a 'breakthrough' to understand what you are really writing."

### Interaction and Negotiation by Experienced Readers and Writers

When readers and writers go back to go forward, they are often attempting to respond to the text from a different perspective. In reading, this may mean trying to see the text through the author's eyes. In writing, this may involve trying to distance ourselves enough from our written words to encounter them as the readers may. Frank Smith (1988) notes that learning to read like a writer is a crucial step in learning to write like a writer:

To read like a writer we engage vicariously with what the author is writing. We anticipate what the author is writing, so that the author is in effect writing on our behalf, not simply showing how something is done but doing it with us. . . . Bit by bit . . . the learner learns through *reading* like a writer to *write* like a writer. (p. 25)

Just as readers project themselves into the role of the writer, writers also project themselves into the roles of readers. Sondra Perl (1990) argues that experienced writers knowingly and deliberately attempt to take their readers' points of view in order to imagine what the reader might need to know for their words to communicate in a way that is clear and compelling. In other words, readers and writers interact and negotiate with their perceived counterpart in order to make meaning. Martin Nystrand (1986) calls the relationship between readers and writers a *condition of reciprocity*. The word *reciprocity* suggests how both parties depend on each other's understanding to ensure a meaningful interaction. The problem comes when there is a mismatch between the reader's and writer's expectations and understandings. For example, even an experienced reader like Tim can become "very impatient" with a text that doesn't meet his expectations and will abandon the collaboration if he can't adequately "make a movie" out of the writer's descriptions. Kim van der Elst, a tenth grader, has experienced the mismatch between what she meant to say and what her reader interpreted. She writes, "I usually write in one great metaphor that only I can really decipher. I guess it's because I am writing for myself and I don't think much about how someone else might interpret it. But then when I think I've written something wonderful, no one really understands it."

## A Strategic Approach

When Tim visualizes the text he is reading, making "a movie in his head," and when he gets "stuck" and tells himself to go back and figure out the problem, he is being strategic. Tim's ability to visualize is probably so developmentally advanced that he can apply this strategy without consciously willing himself to do so (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991); in the case of getting stuck, however, he deliberately accesses his capacity to monitor his comprehension and sends himself a message that there is a problem to be solved. In general, readers and writers purposefully select strategies to orchestrate higher-order thinking. According to Paris, Wasik, and Turner (1991), "Strategic readers are not characterized by the volume of tactics that they use but rather by the selection of appropriate strategies that fit the particular text, purpose and occasion" (p. 611). Similarly, Flower and Hayes (1981a) liken the use of strategies within the writing process to having "a writer's tool kit" (p. 376), which the writer can access, unconstrained by any fixed order, to solve the problem of constructing a text.

Because the use of cognitive strategies is such a crucial factor in the construction of meaning in both reading and writing, these powerful thinking processes will be discussed at length in the next section of this chapter. In general, both readers and writers plan and goal-set, tap prior knowledge, ask questions, predict, visualize, organize, formulate meaning, monitor, revise meaning, and evaluate (Flower & Hayes, 1981a; Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991; Tompkins, 2010). Block and Pressley (2002) indicate that there is a "plethora of research establishing the efficacy" (p. 385) of strategies instruction and emphasize the importance of providing modeling, scaffolding, guided practice, and independent use of strategies so that students can learn to internalize and self-regulate their cognitive and metacognitive processes.

## Automatic Use of Skills, Allowing a Focus on Appropriate Strategies

Experienced readers and writers like Tim and Cris can attend to the higher-level cognitive demands of their respective composing processes because they are not bogged down with consciously executing the information-processing skills required to decode (translate the words on the page into mental or oral speech) or transcribe (put ideas into visible language).

This is not the case with young or inexperienced readers, who are often so focused on understanding individual words in print that they cannot attend to the overall meaning of the sentence or paragraph. Similarly, novice or poor writers must focus primarily on very low-level goals, such as correctly spelling a word or generating and transcribing their thoughts one sentence at a time, and thus cannot maintain a coherent sense of what they want to say.

Researchers agree that the degree to which the skills and subskills of reading and writing are automated affects the fluency, speed, and efficiency with which language is processed. This fluency, in turn, influences the reader's or writer's ability to make meaning (Flower & Hayes, 1981a; La Berge & Samuels, 1974; Scardamalia, 1981; Stanovich, 1991). The more slowly readers and writers decode and transcribe, and the more their attention is directed toward the surface features of language, the less able they are to create coherent meaning (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). Therefore, Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) conclude, "We must provide explicit instruction about both skills and strategies" (p. 370).

## Motivation and Self-Confidence

There is a growing recognition that the development of strategic reading and writing is linked to personal motivation (Blau, 1997; Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). In other words, reading and writing are affective as well as cognitive. This is why Tim will actually go so far as to lock himself in a closet in order to find out what happens in *The Two Towers* and why Cris is willing to "go into great pain" in order to produce a text she can feel proud of. Both individuals are highly motivated. Inexperienced readers and writers may be not only less able but also less willing to make the investment required for genuine engagement. The National Council of Teachers of English (2007a) notes that "motivation can determine whether adolescents engage or disengage in literacy learning" and that the number of students who are not engaged grows at every grade level, reaching "epidemic proportions in high school" (p. 4).

Janet Allen (1995) points out that if the two most powerful sources of motivation are achievement and recognition, as the research she cites by Wiener (1979) suggests, then it is no wonder that inexperienced readers and writers lack motivation. Allen's students could not tell her of any times they had felt successful or received social recognition for their academic achievements. In fact, they had been sent and, at some point, had even begun to send themselves numerous messages about their lack of achievement.

Strategic readers and writers regard themselves as competent to perform the tasks they undertake (Blau, 1997; NCTE, 2007a). Cris is able to "trudge on willingly," to stick with what she describes as a painstaking process, because she is confident in her ability to get the job done. She can also anticipate the sense of satisfaction she will feel when the text is completed. This anticipation, which is based on previous success, fuels Cris's commitment to stay focused. Inexperienced readers and writers have no such history to sustain them. By making visible for inexperienced readers and writers the cognitive strategies that underlie the reading and writing process, particularly in a way that engages them affectively, we may be able to orchestrate incremental experiences of success for students and enable them to reconstruct their perceptions of themselves as learners. This is why Jamie Salafia's sixth graders felt so empowered when they got to teach their parents, and the broader television viewing audience, what goes on in the mind of a reader.



## Cognitive Strategies That Underlie the Reading and Writing Process

Researchers agree that reading and writing are both complex acts of critical thinking. For example, La Berge and Samuels (1974) note that reading is probably one of the most complex skills in the repertoire of the average adult (p. 292); Flower and Hayes (1981b) identify writing as “among the most complex of all human mental activities” (p. 39). Underlying these mental activities are powerful cognitive strategies that are fundamental to the construction of meaning. This is the core of the reading/writing connection. Experienced readers and writers select and implement appropriate strategies and monitor and regulate their use in order to construct and refine meaning. Let’s look at the strategies that underlie the reading and writing process. Figure 1.2 provides a graphic representation of the cognitive strategies that make up a reader’s or writer’s tool kit. The list may give the impression that reading and writing are sequential stage processes in which meaning making progresses in a relatively predictable order. This may occasionally be the case—but only for some readers and writers, some of the time. Remember that experienced readers and writers go back in order to go forward and that they have the knowledge and motivation to access their tool kit of cognitive strategies when the need arises without being constrained by any fixed order.

### Planning and Goal-Setting

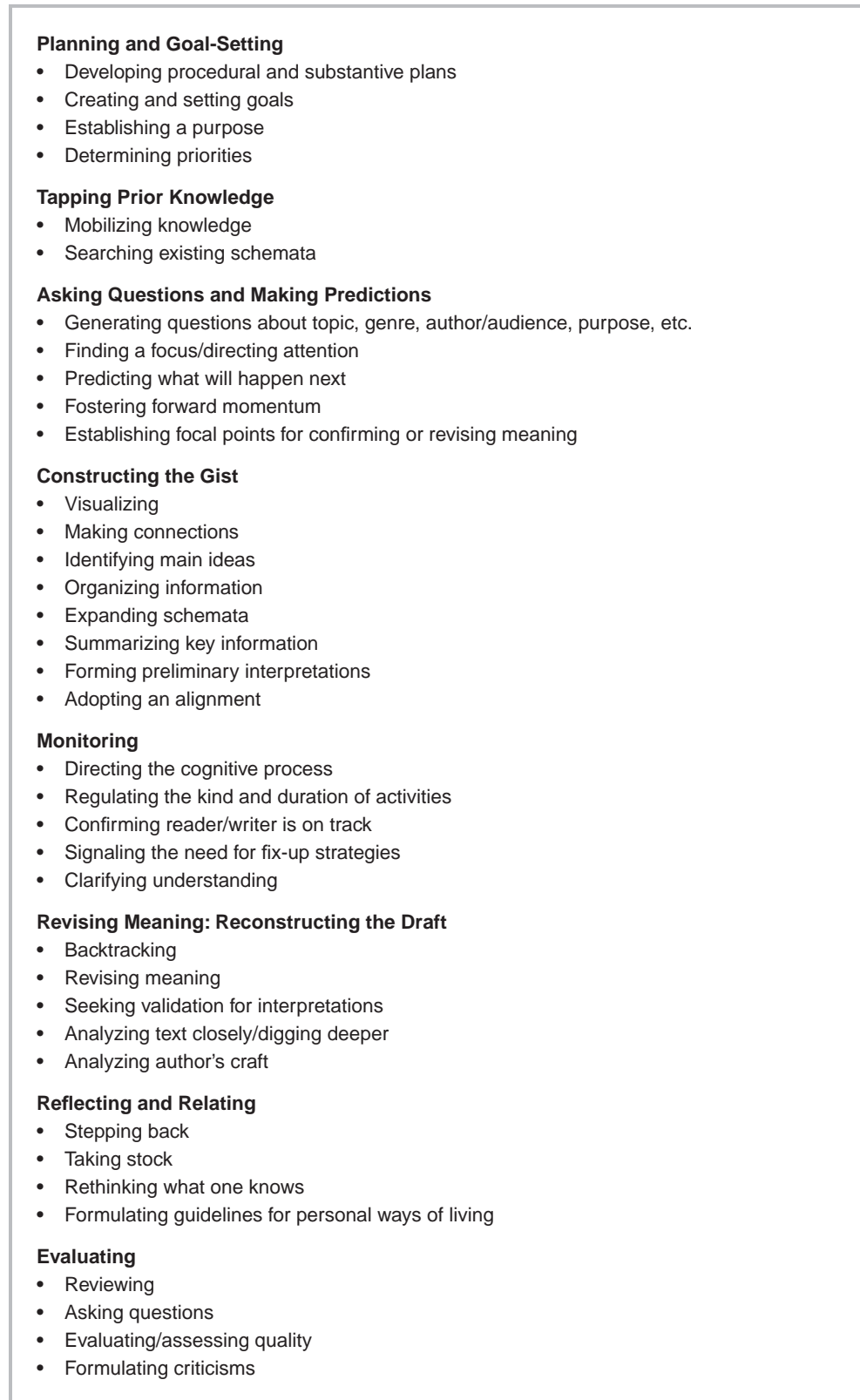
Readers and writers begin to plan even before they tap prior knowledge regarding the task they are about to undertake. In fact, tapping prior knowledge occurs as a result of planning. Readers and writers develop two types of plans—procedural plans and substantive plans (Flower & Hayes, 1981a; Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Procedural plans are content-free plans regarding how to accomplish a task. These “how-to” plans provide a continuing structure for the composing process. For example, plans for generating ideas through brainstorming and outlining fall into this category. Substantive plans are content-based plans that focus more directly on the specific topic at hand. Both procedural and substantive plans help a reader or writer to set goals. According to Flower and Hayes (1981a), the most important aspect of goals is that they are created by the learner. Whereas many plans are stored in and retrieved from long-term memory, goals are generated and revised by the reader or writer as part of the composing process. Both planning and goal-setting establish a purpose for reading or writing as well as enable the learner to determine priorities. Experienced readers and writers not only plan and goal-set more extensively than inexperienced readers and writers but also are more flexible about modifying their plans and goals and more apt to elaborate on and revise them as the text evolves (Faigley, Cherry, Jolliffe, & Skinner, 1985; Flower & Hayes, 1981a).

### Tapping Prior Knowledge

The construction of meaning in both reading and writing “never occurs in a vacuum” (Tierney & Pearson, 1998, p. 88). Readers and writers tap prior knowledge; that is, they draw on long-term memory to access a vast storehouse of background information. Knowledge is usually a resource; however, it can be a limiting factor when there is little information to mobilize (Flower & Hayes, 1980). The reader/writer searches his or her existing schemata to make sense of information from or for a text. According to Tompkins (2006), “Schemata are like mental file cabinets, and new information is organized with prior knowledge in the filing

## Figure 1.2 Cognitive Strategies: A Reader's and Writer's Tool Kit

(Source: Adapted from Flower and Hayes, 1981a; Langer, 1989; Paris, Wasik, and Turner, 1991; Tierney and Pearson, 1983; and Tompkins, 2010.)



An 8½-by-11 copy of this figure is available on the companion website.

system” (p. 12). One might have a personal experiences file cabinet, a cultural expectations file cabinet, a knowledge of topic file cabinet, a knowledge of genre file cabinet, and so forth. As the reader or writer composes, new information is added to these cabinets (i.e., schemata).

## Asking Questions and Making Predictions

As the reader reads or the writer writes, she or he is constructing what Judith Langer (1989) calls an envisionment—a “personal text-world embodying all she or he understands, assumes, or imagines up to that point” (p. 2). In other words, an envisionment is the text you are creating in your mind as you read or write. It will continue to change and deepen as you continue to make meaning. In the early stages of reading or writing, Langer describes the learner as adopting a “stance” toward the text that she calls “being out and stepping into an envisionment” (p. 7). The reader or writer at this point may have a somewhat distant relationship with the text and may be trying to become more familiar with it. For example, Toni Lee, a ninth grader, observes that it’s hard to get into a book at first because “it’s like meeting a new friend. You don’t really know much about him or her which makes it difficult to feel close to the person.” As the reader or writer begins to tap prior knowledge, he or she will naturally start to ask questions. Asking questions is one of the ways to get into a text. As Harvey and Goudvis (2000) put it, “Questions open the door to understanding” (p. 22). The questions readers and writers generate about the topic, genre, author or audience, purpose, and so forth will help them to find a focus and to direct their attention while composing. The predictions readers and writers make about what will happen next foster their forward momentum and become a focal point for confirming or revising meaning. Experienced readers and writers continue to ask questions and make predictions throughout the reading/writing process.

## Constructing the Gist

The initial envisionment that a reader or writer creates is, in essence, a first draft. In other words, he or she is constructing the gist of the text. An early step in creating a “personal text-world” (Langer, 1989, p. 2) is to visualize it. In studying the students in his middle school classroom, Jeff Wilhelm (2008) noted that his engaged readers mentally anticipated entering the story world even before curling up with a good book. For example, Wilhelm’s student Ron said, “When I get ready to read I always think about what kind of story it is, you know, and what I’ll have to do to get into it. I kind of imagine myself inside the story, even before I start reading and what it’s going to be like in there” (p. 73). In a sense, then, experienced readers may begin to construct their envisionment by visualizing the act of entering the story world itself. Writers also conjure up a vision of what they want to create, but this perception, which Sondra Perl (1990) calls the “felt sense,” is perhaps more kinesthetic than spatial. According to Perl, the felt sense is “anchored in the writer’s body” (p. 46), and it is from the felt sense that the writer summons the images, words, ideas, and feelings that will be transformed into written words. Christina Chang, a ninth grader, captures the power of tapping the felt sense when she remarks, “When writing something I really care about I feel as if I am exploding inside with emotion. Ideas come rushing out so fast I cannot even catch up with my writing.”

Once inside the text world, readers and writers begin to create mental and/or linguistic images of the text landscape. Like Tim, many students describe the process of visualization with a movie-making metaphor, noting that they can use slow motion or flashback as well as fast-forward. Students also personalize what they are reading or writing about by making connections—drawing on their own real-world experiences to make meaning and enrich what they are constructing. For instance, Michelle Gajewski, an eleventh grader, reflects, “When a

light goes on and something in a book touches my life it's scary in a way. But, then again, it's also nice because it can bring up old memories but help me see them with a new insight that is refreshing." As the reader or writer constructs the gist of this first draft, he or she will also identify main ideas and organize information, sequencing and prioritizing the events or ideas into main and supporting details; into beginning, middle, and end; from most to least important; or in some other structural format. One of the keys to determining importance is the ability to summarize. Research shows that teaching students to summarize helps them to remember what they have read and to communicate it to others in writing (Graham & Perin, 2007).

As students move from being outside a text to stepping into a text, they will use personal experiences and knowledge as well as their perceptions of the text they have read or written thus far to "push their envisionments along" (p. 10)—in other words, to formulate meaning. Langer calls this next stance "being in and moving through an envisionment." Scholes (1985) notes that readers constantly shift from reading to interpretation and that writers construct certain texts to force this shift. This shift from reading to forming preliminary interpretations is activated when the reader senses that the text has levels of meaning and that to move beyond what is literally happening to what might be inferred at a deeper or more symbolic level of meaning, one must actively develop one's own conception of the text's significance.

Tierney and Pearson (1983) believe that adopting an alignment "can have an overriding influence on the composer's ability to achieve coherence" (p. 572). They define alignment as the reader's/writer's stance toward the author or audience and the degree to which the reader or writer adopts and immerses himself or herself in a variety of roles during the construction of meaning. They explain:

A writer's stance toward her readers might be intimate, challenging or quite neutral. And, within the context of these collaborations she might share what she wants to say through characters or as an observer of events. Likewise, a reader can adopt a stance toward the writer which is sympathetic, critical or passive. And, within the context of these collaborations, he can immerse himself in the text as an eyewitness, participant or character. (p. 572)

Michelle Gajewski writes of her experience as a reader, "When I begin to feel a kinship for a character, I find that I begin to feel their emotions and begin to think the way they do." Michelle's eleventh-grade classmate Qui Think aligns herself even more closely. She notes, "There are times when a book speaks of me. I don't feel like I am there with the character; I am the character. Sometimes I get too emotional and it's not exactly the character I'm crying over but I am reminded of experiences I have had."

The alignment or perspective we assume shapes the images we visualize, the connections we make, the ideas and information we identify and organize, and the meaning we formulate. "Just as a filmmaker can adopt and vary the angle from which a scene is depicted in order to maximize the richness of a filmgoer's experience," Tierney and Pearson argue, "so too can a reader and writer adopt and vary the angle from which language meanings are negotiated" (p. 573).

## Monitoring

Experienced readers and writers are able not only to select and implement appropriate cognitive strategies but also to monitor and regulate their use. The monitor has been called an executive function, a "third eye," and a strategist (Flower & Hayes, 1981a; Langer, 1986; Tierney & Pearson, 1983). In both reading and writing, the monitor, which is a metacognitive process, directs the reader's or writer's cognitive process as he or she strives to make meaning. In essence, it keeps track of the ongoing composing process and decides what activities should be engaged in and for how long. The monitor may send the reader or writer a

signal confirming that he or she is on the right track and should proceed full steam ahead, or may raise a red flag when understanding or communication has broken down and the composer needs to apply fix-up strategies and clarify meaning. Experienced readers and writers are keenly attuned to their monitors. Tim is well aware when he gets “stuck” and immediately goes back as many pages as necessary to “figure out the problem.” Cris instinctively knows if what she has “knocked out” is good stuff—if “the guts are out on the page.” When her monitor approves, Cris is filled with pride like a “knobby-kneed little kid.” Younger and less experienced readers and writers often have difficulty operationalizing their monitors, because they often are so focused on lower-level tasks that they don’t have the resources or attention to monitor and regulate their process; they lack awareness of how to monitor their own cognitive activities; and/or they may fail to take action when the monitor does tell them they need to revise (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). Because monitoring is a “critical step in self-regulation” (Block & Pressley, 2002), it is not enough to teach students cognitive strategies. Metacognitive instruction on how and why to use a strategy is necessary to enable the learner to “examine the strategy, to monitor its effectiveness, and to revise goals or means if necessary” (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008, p. 368).

### Revising Meaning: Reconstructing the Draft

Although the monitor sends readers and writers a variety of messages throughout the composing process, what often activates the monitor is a sense that there is a breakdown in the construction of meaning. This recognition will usually cause the reader or writer to stop and backtrack, to return to reread bits of text in order to revise meaning and reconstruct the draft. Less experienced readers and writers tend to plunge in and proceed from start to finish in a linear fashion; in contrast, experienced readers and writers “revise their understanding recursively” (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991, p. 614). Strategic readers and writers may also make several passes through the text to seek validation for their interpretations (Langer, 1986; Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). Although ample research documents that experienced readers and writers go back in order to go forward as they move through an envisionment, studies of readers’ think-alouds and writers’ protocols also indicate that the “revision cycles” of individual readers and writers differ markedly (Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Some writers, like Cris, “mull and stew” during prewriting; then “knock out” a draft without thinking; then finally, painstakingly and repeatedly, revise the draft. Eleventh grader Qui Think’s writing process is similar to Cris’s:

■ If I just dive in, I often write things that are irrelevant to the topic. Therefore, I plan ahead before I write. It’s much easier if you plan but that doesn’t mean you won’t encounter problems along the way. I often get an idea and get fascinated and write like a mad dog. But then, I can also sit staring at my computer screen for the longest time just looking at the empty page. Then, surprisingly, something strikes me and I’ll write like mad again.

Writing would be easier if people thought of it like drawing. We start with a sketch, then color it, and afterwards put on the final touches to make it stand out.

—Qui

Other writers who have very strong monitors mentally revise a draft even before putting pen to paper and, consequently, write very slowly. Still others progress in segments, writing and revising a chunk of text at a time.

Many inexperienced readers think the sign of a good reader is to read rapidly straight through a text with maximum recall (Schallert & Tierney, 1982); in actuality, experienced readers pause, backtrack, reflect, and revise their initial “drafts” of texts just like writers do. Here

again, the revision cycles of readers are widely divergent. Some readers may pause in mid-sentence, proceed page by page, or proceed chapter by chapter, clarifying and revising meaning as they go. Others, like Keri Kemble, a university-level student, consciously read in drafts:

■ My reading process seems to me like going clamming. You go to the beach and, first of all, get to walk quickly over sand furthest away from the shore. As you reach the shoreline, you scan the surface of the sand to look for any slight bumps or bubbles. This is like my first read-through. I pick up the book and zoom through, enjoying the ride and the surface aspects of the story. Then it's time to start looking carefully for some clue, some little treasure. You bend closer to the sand, to see the telltale signs more clearly. When you catch those bubbles, or if you're lucky, the little hairs of the clam are waving like a flag in the receding water, you run over and dig quickly. This is exactly like when you stumble upon something in the text that gives you a starting point to explore a deeper theme. When you find the clue in the sand, you have to dig in order to get the clam.

—Keri

What's intriguing about Keri's clamming analogy is the idea of analyzing text closely and digging deeper—something that experienced readers and writers do: Readers dig deeper in the text, analyzing how the nuances of the writer's language affect meaning, to discover the pearls, often creating their own meaning beyond that suggested by the text (Wilhelm, 2008). Writers may reach into themselves, back into the felt sense, to move the text to a deeper level of complexity.

## Reflecting and Relating

As readers and writers begin to crystallize their envisionment of the meaning of a text, they are likely to ask the question *So what?* Langer (1986) calls this stance “stepping back and rethinking what one knows” (p. 13). In essence, the reader/writer who has been immersed in the text world steps back to ponder not just *What does it mean?* but *What does it mean to me?* When students make connections while constructing the gist, they are using their personal experiences and background knowledge to enrich their understanding of the text and make their own personal meaning. Wilhelm (2008) points out as one of his “key findings” that if students cannot do this—if they cannot bring “personally lived experience to literature”—then “the reverse operation, bringing literature back to life” (p. 93), will not take place. In this stance, which is more likely to occur in the latter stages of the meaning-making process, readers “use their envisionments to reflect on and sometimes enrich their real world” (Langer, 1989, p. 14). This is why, after completing a book, Tim always rereads the opening “in an effort to fully understand the journey I have just finished.” Ultimately, this type of stepping back, taking stock, and rethinking what one knows can help students to “gain heightened awareness of their personal identities and to formulate guidelines for personal ways of living” (Wilhelm, 2008, p. 93).

## Evaluating

Evaluating means “stepping out and objectifying the experience” (Langer, 1989, p. 14) of reading or writing. In this stance, readers and writers distance themselves from the envisionment they have been constructing. They review the mental or written text they have developed, ask questions about their purpose, and evaluate or assess the quality of their experience with the text and the meaning they have made.

When students evaluate either the process or the product of their reading or writing, or both, they do so against a set of criteria—internal or external—of what it means to read or write well. Judging how well one's reading or writing measures up to norms is an act of

criticism. According to Scholes (1985), when we read (and, by analogy, when we write) we produce *text within text*. That is, we are constructing an initial understanding of the gist. When we interpret, we produce *text upon text*. We look closely, engage in a dialogue with the text, dig deeper, and formulate and revise our meaning, often adding new layers of meaning to our initial envisionment. When we criticize, we produce *text against text*. In other words, we exercise what Scholes calls “taste,” which is never “a truly personal thing but a carefully inculcated norm” (p. 24). In the act of producing text against text, we turn, once again, to the monitor. The monitor may confirm that the reader’s or writer’s journey is complete and worthwhile; send the learner back into the text to redraft; or, occasionally, prompt the reader or writer to label the experience and/or the artifact as unsatisfactory but not worth revisiting.

## The Power of Taking a Cognitive Strategies Approach to Integrating Reading and Writing Instruction

It is precisely because reading and writing access similar cognitive strategies that they make such a powerful combination when taught in connection with each other. Research suggests that using writing as a learning tool in reading instruction leads to better reading achievement, and that using reading as a resource for elaborating on ideas or for understanding opposing views leads to better writing performance (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991; Tierney, Soter, O’Flahavan, & McGinley, 1989). More importantly, reading and writing taught together engage students in a greater use and variety of cognitive strategies than do reading and writing taught separately (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991, p. 272). This exposure to and practice in an array of cognitive strategies promotes and enhances critical thinking. In fact, research indicates that “reading and writing in combination have the potential to contribute in powerful ways to thinking” (Tierney et al., 1989, p. 166). Mark Conley (2008) notes that “numerous reports from blue ribbon panels and research and policy centers implicate poor understandings of cognitive strategies as the primary reason why adolescents struggle with reading and writing (Deshler, Palinscar, Biancarosa, & Nair, 2007; Graham, 2006; Snow & Biancarosa, 2003)” (p. 84). This is why there is widespread agreement among literacy scholars that students should be explicitly taught cognitive and metacognitive strategies in school.

At the close of his *Harvard Education Review* article, Conley (2008) remarks that despite its promise, we “simply do not know enough about cognitive strategy instruction and its educational role over time” and calls for increased attention to exploring “how teachers can learn to integrate cognitive strategy instruction effectively” (p. 98). This book will showcase the work of exemplary teachers who have intentionally and strategically integrated cognitive strategies into their instruction to make the reading/writing connection a reality in their classrooms—as a model for prospective teachers who are building their instructional repertoire and for existing teachers who wish to enhance their expertise. It will highlight the pedagogical strategies exemplary teachers have developed and/or adapted and implemented based on the professional literature in order to highlight what experienced readers and writers do when they construct meaning from or with texts, and to help students become aware that readers and writers draw from the same tool kit of cognitive strategies when they compose. Succeeding chapters will not only feature an array of individual strategies but also carefully scaffold these strategies in demonstration lessons. Teachers can use the demonstration lessons as a point of departure for developing their own curricula, appropriate for their own students’ needs and interests.

## To Sum Up

Reading and writing have traditionally been thought of and taught as opposites—with reading regarded as receptive and writing as productive. However, researchers have increasingly noted the connections between reading and writing, identifying them as essentially similar processes of meaning construction. Experienced readers and writers share a surprising number of common characteristics. Both readers and writers:

- Are actively engaged in constructing meaning from and with texts
- Go back to go forward in a recursive process
- Interact and negotiate with each other (i.e., the reader keeps the writer in mind and the writer keeps the reader in mind)
- Access a common tool kit of cognitive strategies including: planning and goal-setting, tapping prior knowledge, asking questions and making connections, constructing the gist, monitoring, revising meaning, reflecting and relating, and evaluating
- Use skills automatically
- Are motivated and self confident

It is the responsibility of the teacher to show students what experienced readers and writers do when they compose; to introduce the cognitive strategies that underlie reading and writing in meaningful contexts; and to provide enough sustained, guided practice that students can internalize these strategies and perform complex independent tasks competently and confidently.

## Learning Log Reflection

A learning log is a place to think out loud on paper—to explore, ask questions, make connections, organize information, dig deeper, and reflect on and assess what one is learning. As you read this book, you may want to keep a learning log to chronicle your reactions to and reflections about this text.

Begin by returning to the K-W-L chart (Figure 1.1). Fill out the What I Learned column to revisit what you have learned about the reading/writing connection. Then think about your own meaning-making process as you interacted with this text. You may want to take a look at Figure 1.2, Cognitive Strategies: A Reader’s and Writer’s Tool Kit, as you write your reflection.

The questions below may also serve as a point of departure as you explore the acts of mind you engaged in while reading this chapter. Do not feel compelled to answer them all; rather, use them to stimulate your thinking:

1. For what purpose did you read this chapter?
2. How much prior knowledge did you bring to the text and to what degree did it help you to construct your own gist of what you were reading?
3. Given that the substance of the text was cognitively demanding, was it difficult to move from being outside the text to stepping in?
4. What kinds of questions did you ask yourself as you read?
5. Did your monitor ever say, *I don’t get this* and cause you to backtrack?
6. What is the *So what?* of this chapter for you? What implications do you take away for yourself as a teacher?